

Tuesday, February 28th, 2023

Gayle Duska Marx

Good afternoon, Senator Osten, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Gayle Duska Marx, and I am a registered voter in the town of Stratford.

I am testifying regarding the Department of Mental Health and Addition Services Budget. I am the Program Manager at Bridge House, a psycho-social rehabilitation program for adults with mental health conditions, in Bridgeport.

During the Pandemic, Bridge House reached out to our members by phone, texts, setting up a virtual community, and weekly newsletter mailings.

All our services were offered pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and with the help of your increased funding post pandemic. Without funding for our program from DMHAS we could not offer our members the many services we find they are so desperately in need of when they come to us. Many of our members come to us homeless, jobless, with family issues, and medication issues and are isolated, lonely, and afraid.

Over the past 29 years at Bridge House, I have watched many members get housed, find employment, go to school, and develop meaningful relationships. It is for these many reasons; I am asking for an increase in funding for improving the quality of life for our most deserving members who face mental health challenges in their everyday life. Thank you.